Consultation Summary
of the
New Industry Training Model
for
British Columbia

May 2003

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Ministry of Advanced Education

A PDF version of this document is available on the Industry Training website at:
http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/industrytraining

Consultation on the proposed Industry Training Model for British Columbia.

BACKGROUND

A new model for industry training is being developed to meet the needs of apprentices, employers and communities, and to provide British Columbia with a skilled, mobile work force that can fill looming skills shortages.

The current system of industry training administered through the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission (ITAC) is not able to respond quickly enough to the growing needs of British Columbia's changing economy, despite annual funding of $70 million for trades and technical training. For example the number of apprentices in traditional trades has not increased significantly over the past five years, (approximately 16,000) and the non-completion rate is 50%. If this trend continues there will be limited growth in critical trades areas.

The new model will not eliminate traditional apprenticeship training but will build more flexible pathways to training and certification to better meet the needs of apprentices, employers, communities and the market place. The inter-provincial (Red Seal) certification will remain in place to ensure a work force with skills that adhere to national standards.

Primary steps in the development of a new model were the phasing out of ITAC and the establishment of an industry training Transition Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC, made up of business, labour and education representatives, has had significant input into the proposed framework for the new model set out in the discussion paper – *A New Model for Industry Training in British Columbia.*

This discussion paper was the basis of broad consultation. Eight forums were held in key locations to solicit input and pinpoint regional perspectives on the new industry training model. Forums were held in:

Location	**Date**	**Participants**
Nanaimo	January 14, 2003	57
Vancouver	January 15, 2003	90
Fraser Valley	January 23, 2003	75
Kamloops	January 28, 2003	130
Prince George	February 4, 2003	201
Fort St. John	February 5, 2003	35
Terrace	February 10, 2003	39
Cranbrook	February 13, 2003	81
		708 Total

Input to the proposed new model was not restricted to the regional forums. There was provision for feedback to the discussion paper through the ministry web site, by e-mail, fax and post.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

A. Regional Forums

A balanced group of stakeholders directly involved in the industry training system, including employers, apprentices, trainers, students and SSA co-ordinators, were invited to participate in the forums. Many individuals who were not invited were also able to participate because of space made available when invited stakeholders proved unable to attend. In total, more than seven hundred people participated and while some issues arose repeatedly *all* views, suggestions and concerns are being considered in building the new industry training model.

Results of the Forums
To focus the discussion at these forums the following questions were posed:

1. What flexibility does the present system lack? Does the new model adequately address these needs? What improvements could be made in this regard?

2. How should the government hold the new Industry Training System accountable? For what things should it be held accountable? Does the Discussion Paper adequately address this?

3. A strict adherence to compulsory trades regulation, as currently defined, is inconsistent with the modularized, progressive-credentialing aspect of the proposed new model. How can this be resolved? How should standards for public safety and consumer protection be maintained?

The discussion points evoked diverse opinion among participants regarding the proposed industry training model. Most of the participants agreed changes to the system are necessary; only a few people opposed any change at all. While some believed the new model would provide solutions to previous weaknesses in the system, others alleged certain changes threatened the quality of training and credentials, and jeopardized worker and public safety. Here are some specifics from the main stakeholder groups.

Employers

Employers emphasized that a "one-size-fits-all" apprenticeship approach doesn't meet individual employer and regional needs. There was an emerging employer concensus that broad skills sets are vital for certain regions where workers are required to be trained in all aspects of a trade, while in the lower mainland specialty skill sets might be useful because of the size and demands of the labour market. Some regional employers, though, saw modular training as a vehicle for already qualified workers to add skills and scope to their jobs and meet new technological demands. Maintaining the Red Seal certification was widely supported for guaranteeing standards of quality and mobility.

One of the main concerns was the continued supply of qualified workers. Employers cited barriers including collective agreements, a shortage of training spaces, and a secondary school system that doesn't seem to value careers in trades. Many felt apprentice and trades training should start in high school, be better promoted, and that there could be beneficial partnerships among school districts, colleges and

industry. Compulsory trades were seen as unnecessary by some employers while others described them as a necessary inducement to training in the full scope of a trade.

Trainers

Trainers observe an apparent shortage of employment opportunities for apprentices and Entry Level Trades Training (ELTT) graduates because there is an inadequate number of employers willing to take them on. Some had concerns about the elimination of apprenticeship counselors which have been the link between apprentice and employer. Others pointed out it can be expensive to change training delivery methods and also questioned how the new model would affect class planning.

Educators and career co-ordinators in the K-12 system emphasized the success of the Secondary School Apprenticeship program and its key role in getting young people interested in trades training. Many felt there should be more promotion of trades training to students and parents and had concerns about how that would be accomplished and paid for under the new model. They pointed out that employers had not done a good job promoting trades careers to date.

Apprentices/Tradesworkers

Many apprentices described from personal experience how difficult it was to obtain an apprenticeship or to find an employer who would commit to their training over four or five years. They wanted to know how the new model would change that and how it would meet their needs and not just the needs of employers.

A general concern among apprentices was that the option of obtaining progressive credentials through a modular training process would lead to apprentices being pigeon-holed into one set of skills by employers, and that would prevent apprentices achieving broad based skills training and credentials and therefore limit their earning power. Some also feared the new model might shorten apprenticeship, and that this would be detrimental as the on-the-job component with a qualified journeyperson is a vital part of their learning.

Unions/Associations

A key concern expressed by unions and associations was that employers are not always willing to commit to long-term training for employees. The old model, they said, suffered as a result and there were concerns that the new model would not address the issue. This group of stakeholders feels the new industry training authority must be accountable for increasing the number of apprentices. One representative summed up what many appeared to believe: "B.C. is facing an opportunities shortage not a skills shortage". The maintenance of compulsory trades in the new model was seen as critical for reasons of public and worker safety and to motivate trainees to progress to a full credential.

There was general agreement among this group that the focus must be on improving training, maintaining a field presence to support apprentices, and that industry would not adequately encourage or support apprenticeship. A central concern was the perception that the new training authority board would consist solely of employers with no labour representatives.

B. Other Submissions

Public input was not restricted to the regional forums. There was opportunity to comment on the discussion paper through the web site, by e-mail, and through fax and post. There were 165 submissions received in this way. For the most part the submissions echoed the issues and concerns of the forum participants.

The ministry also received two petitions with a total of more than 600 names calling for the maintenance of apprenticeship and trades qualifications in British Columbia.

The names of persons and organizations who submitted written responses to the discussion paper are listed in **Attachment 1.**

Attachment 2 sets out the key themes identified in the responses to the discussion paper in a bit more detail and offers a brief comment on how issues may be addressed in the new model.

C. Legislation

The next step in building the new industry training model is legislation to establish and empower an Industry Training Authority, which was introduced in the legislature on April 30, 2003. An industry training board will be established as a first step in the implementation of the Authority.

It is anticipated that full transition to a new model will take some time. A transition office, the Industry Training Centre, comprising of former ITAC staff, has been established to provide support to employers and apprentices as the Industry Training Authority becomes operational. Staff will answer questions and provide advice and referral services through toll free telephone lines. In addition, Government Agents' Offices throughout the province will provide assessment services to tradesworkers and supervise inter-provincial examinations.

The board members of the proposed new Industry Training Authority will be presented with the comments on the discussion paper to assist them in developing policies and operational procedures.

ATTACHMENT 1

Name	Organization
Abigail Fulton, A/President	British Columbia Construction Association
Alphonse J. Litjens, Program Director	Technical Education Services
Andrew Huige, Executive Director	Aerospace Industry Association of British Columbia
Anonymous	IBEW Provincial Council of BC
Anonymous	BCGEU
Anonymous	Cosmetologists' Association of BC (CABC)
Barry O'Neill, President	CUPE BC Division
Brad Evans, Manager, Employment Relations	Comfer (Council on Northern Interior Forest Employment Relations)
Bruce Nelson	Trainer, North Okanagan Employment Society
Certified Welder	Employer, Barracuda Enterprises
Char Wilson	Training Coordinator, Skookumchuck Pulp mill, Tembec Industries Inc.
Charlie Code	Plumbing Officials Association of BC
Chris Playsted, President	Playsted Sheet Metal Ltd
Cindy Oliver, President	College Institute Educators' Association of BC
Curtis F. Latham, President	Airport Training Council-Vernon
Dave Coles, Vice President Western Region	Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada
David A. Thompson Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive Officer	Teckcominco
David Podmore, President and CEO	Concert Properties Ltd.
Don Tonsaker Administrator and Instructor	Operators Training School
Don White	Cam Air-Systems Ltd
Doug Anderson, Industrial Technology Teacher	Lord Tweedsmuir Secondary School
Doug Podetz Career Programs Facilitator and Chairperson of SSA Steering Committee	Surrey School District
Frank Cairo	Marvel College
Gary Gooch, Owner	Horizon Cladding Ltd
Glen Buckles	Manager, BCAA
Glen Ringdal, President	BC Auto Dealers Association
Glen Smith	Instructor, MUC
Graham Trafford	Employer, Mott Electric
Gregg Lowes, Executive Director	BC Wall and Ceiling Association
Hedy Dyck	Education and Labour, BC Landscape and Nursery Association
Jay Bull, President	Sheet Metal
Jeff McClellan, Jeff Dickson, Dave Hetherington, Grant Vanderhoek,	Langley School District 35
Jerry Lampert, President	Business Council of British Columbia
Jessi Zielke, Executive Director	CES, Career Education Society
Joe Lindgren	Lincor Enterprises Ltd.
Judy Moore, Deputy Minister	Department of Education, Government of the Yukon

Name	Organization
Keith Cutler	New Communication Concepts Ltd.
Keith Sashaw, President	Vancouver Regional Construction Association
Keith Wemp	Employer, Kilowomp Electric Ltd.
Kevin Joyce, Instructor	UCC Electrical Department
Les Wiebe, Welding, Instructor	The University College of the Cariboo
Linda Love	Dean of Trades, MUC
Mark Curtis, Business Manager	Sheet Metal Worker's International Association
Mary-Anne Epp	Director of Contract Administration, Library Services, LGC
Michelle Laurie, President	Local 258 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers AFL-CIO, CLC
Monika Lauterbacher, President	Okanagan Chefs Association
Neil Worboys, President	British Columbia Teacher's Federation
Norm Dishkin	Commercial Transport Instructor, NLC
Norman E. Bryson, Chair	Program Advisory Committee Commercial Transport Mechanics
Pat McConnell, President	P&R Western Star Trucks
Paul Rouillard, General Manager Janice Peters, CHRP Manager, Human Resources	EBCO Industries Ltd.
Paul Sourisseau, Solid Wood Training Advisory Committee	Interior Forest Labour Relations Association
Phil Johnston	Instructor, Auto Technician Program Trades, VCC
R.D. Hatch, Principal	Principal, Marion Schilling Elementary School
R.R. (Russ) Fulton, President	Howe Sound Pulp and Paper Limited Partnership
Ralph Finch, President	BC Association of Trades and Technical Administrators
Randy O'Donnell, Manager, Industry and Government Relations	Service Plus Training Institute
Ray Fischer, Chair	Mechanical Metal Trades Department, CMC
Ray Howard	Instructor, Camosun College, tradesman, business owner
Rick Petryshen	Variable Mechanical Services Ltd.
Rod Audia, President	United Steelworkers Local 480
Rodger Moore	Tradesworker/Instructor, Camosun College
Rolf Arnold, BC President	Society of Vocational Instructors of British Columbia
Scott Hendrickson	Employer, RPI Systems, Surrey
Stephanie Forsyth, President	Northwest Community College (NWCC)
Susan Hart-Kulbaba, Chair	Apprenticeship and Trades Qualification Board
Tim Seppanen	Consultant/ Trainer, REM Contracting Campbell River
Tom Sigurdson, Executive Director	BC & Yukon Territory Building& Construction Trades Council
Unknown	Dowler Construction Co.
Unknown, Trades Division	Selkirk College
Vivian Kapusta	Teacher K-12, School District 42 (Maple Ridge)- Thomas Haney Secondary
W.I. Crarer	Employer, Canem Systems
Wayne Cox, Business Manager	United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America Local 1598
Wayne Spencer	K-12 Stakeholder, SSA Program
Wiho Papenbrock, Regional Coordinator	BCGEU
Unknown	Williams Lake and District Chamber of Commerce

* There were also submissions from individuals. The *Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act* prevents publication of these names.

ATTACHMENT 2 **STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS**

Traditional Apprenticeship			
Employers ▪ Rural employers need fully qualified workers with complete training. ▪ Modular specialization of workers not applicable outside the lower mainland. ▪ Mentoring an important part of training.	Trainers ▪ Labour issues stopped employers from signing up apprentices. ▪ Insufficient places to indenture apprentices. ▪ Resources – people and money need to be available.	Apprentices ▪ Monitored learning between journey person and apprentice is irreplaceable. ▪ Industry can't regulate quality of work: it must be done by government and journey persons. ▪ 4 years is minimum, employers want fully credentialed trades people.	Unions/Association ▪ There's an opportunity shortage not a skills shortage. ▪ Increase apprenticeship places. ▪ Time honoured tradition that has worked for decades.
New Model			
The traditional apprenticeship model will still be available for employers and apprentices who choose it. Apprentices will also have the option of becoming certified in different components of a trade or trades, or building on existing skills through modules. The government recognizes the industry training system can't be built on a "one size fits all" concept. There are individual industry and regional criteria to be taken into account.			

Competency-based/ Modular Training			
Employers: • Modular competencies can work and will allow employees to move with trades. • Journeymen need to train after they get their tickets to keep up to date. • Partially-skilled workers will be stuck at lower paid jobs.	**Trainers:** • Don't focus on minimum competencies. • Need more recognition for alternative work experience. • Should call this multi-skilling.	**Apprentices/Tradesworkers:** • Smaller employers will abuse module system. • Modularization will discourage new entrants. • Don't speed up training process.	**Unions/Associations:** • Modularization will de-skill – it's aimed at urban workers with single skills. • Flexibility won't work in electrical trade. • Get foundation training before specialization is offered in modules.
New Model			
Competency based credentials through modular training will allow trainees to build on their skills and knowledge to the applied degree or degree level. The new model will not lower qualifications. Modular training offers more possibilities for achieving credentials that meet provincial and national standards. The new model will shift the focus to outcomes, the results of the training process, and on achieving recognized competencies and standards. Competency–based assessment with a combination of theory and practical examinations will guarantee credibility and acceptance of credentials.			

Local Training			
Employers: • Industry needs to help trainers upgrade curriculum. • Training should fit community needs for safety. • Regional issues and training needs differ.	**Trainers:** • Develop database of requests for specialized training around the province. • Skill requirements tend to be regional. • Decentralize new programs, offer regional incentives.	**Apprentices/Tradesworkers:** • Employers need to be committed to hiring entry level workers. • Use local facilities to train apprentices.	**Unions/Associations:** • Industry should help develop curriculum. • Build on local input. • Lack of local access is one of reasons apprentices fail to complete.
New Model			
A consistent position of all the stakeholders in every forum was that local colleges and trainers should work closely with employers and should be utilized to full capacity. Employers and apprentices pointed out the costliness and inefficiency of sending trainees out of their home area to technical training at distant colleges. A new, flexible model must build on local strengths and also strengthen the capacity to provide relevant industry training in rural regions and communities. In each forum, college instructors and secondary school coordinators cited local initiatives and pilot projects that provide a base upon which to construct the new model.			

Secondary School Apprenticeship			
Employers • Expose young people to industry training in high school. • Need young people to bring new and updated skills. • There are barriers to bringing in young people.	**Trainers:** • Continue with the SSA program. • Improve marketing of trades to encourage involvement of young people. • K-12 should be source of new apprentices.	**Apprentices/Tradesworkers:** • SSA is a good program. • Students need access to trades information and programs. • Need more trades information in schools.	**Unions/Associations:** • K-12 spaces will be diminished. • We need to get into high schools and market trades careers. • Promotion of trades is lacking for parents and students.
New Model			
The Secondary School Apprenticeship (SSA) will be maintained under the new model. This program is important to attract more young people to explore careers in trades, and provides an avenue to change attitudes of parents and educators to recognizing trades training as a first class career choice. The SSA Transition Advisory Committee and the government have been exploring ways to expand the program, align it with the new model and encourage greater participation. Pilot projects have been developed to demonstrate that high school students can access college-level technical training and assessment and also gain credits toward high school graduation. Broadening the SSA program to include an exploration of skilled trades careers is also being considered in the transition to the new model.			

Red Seal Credential			
• **Employers:** • Red Seal is starting point, but people have to be prepared to keep on learning. • The new model may undermine Red Seal. • Are standards for Red Seal changing in B.C.?	**Trainers:** • People need transferable skills. • Make trades training more accessible but keep Red Seal. • BC standards are already very high.	**Apprentices/Tradesworkers:** • Training and Inter-provincial essential for safety. • Standardized competency important. Inter-provincial should still mean something. • Don't let small business drive training levels and standards.	**Union/Associations:** • Red Seal critical to get work elsewhere. • Red seal must be maintained. • Government should remain in charge of Red Seal.
New Model			
Red Seal credentials and standards will be maintained under the new *Industry Training Authority Act;* however, there will be more pathways to attain provincial and national standards. The new act will allow the Industry Training Authority to establish provincially accredited training programs and set standards for these programs with the Minister's approval. Once apprentices have obtained provincial qualifications they can choose to write inter-provincial exams to obtain Red Seal certification. To meet provincial standards there will be competency-based assessment of apprentices through practical exams. British Columbia will continue to work with other provincial and territorial partners across the country on the development of Red Seal curriculum to ensure it combines our skills training needs with national standard requirements.			